Carpet Recycling in Washington
Current Landscape

**Design & Production**
- Carpet hard to take apart and not designed to be recycled
- Properties of resins have critical impact on whether carpet is recyclable
- Nylon markets are strong
- Manufacturers increasingly use inexpensive PET from plastic bottles for face fiber, but PET from carpet is not recyclable
- Limited demand and markets for PP, PET, and calcium carbonate from carpet
- No universal definition of “sustainably recycled”

**Use & Reuse**
- Potential for greater reuse of carpet tiles locally
- Revisions of third-party product standards and rating systems applicable to carpet (NSF 140, LEED, Living Future, etc.)
- Green building companies increasingly see products as “assets” to “farm”
- Consumers and “specifiers” don’t realize PET carpet isn’t recyclable

**End-of-Life Management**
- PET crisis
- Inadequate processing technology, including low yield
- Sorting by fiber type and processing is time-consuming and expensive
- Asbestos and other contamination
- Only 2 processors in state – not dialing back but not taking new customers
- Carpet recycling reported as more expensive in Washington than elsewhere
- Inadequate drop-off locations
- Sometimes long haul distances to processors
- Cost difference between disposal and recycling not enough for recycling to be consistently viable for collectors
- Customers not aware of recycling options
- Local building and solid waste codes strengthened to require waste diversion, salvage assessment, landfill bans including on carpet

*Graphic from “Materials Management in Oregon” as modified for the draft 2014 Washington State Solid & Hazardous Waste Plan Update*